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The Yuma Sun  
Letter to the Editor

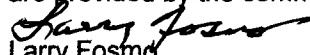
Subject: Marooned on a county island

WS-03478A-08-0608

The 8000 sewer customers in the unincorporated township of the Yuma foothills are helpless to defend themselves against the outrageous rate increases requested by the private-for-profit Far West Water and Sewer Company (Far West) for approval by the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC). ACC is a political entity that is charged with determining rates without taking into account all underlying factors. The sewer customers are being singled out by Far West to pay for all past, current and future costs plus a profit without regard to their liability for mismanagement and their collusion with their partner company, H&S Developers whose property development has increased the great demand for more sewers and has garnered millions of profits. This a clear case of "conflict of interest and is not taken into account by ACC and the County of Yuma. The County of Yuma, guardian of our taxes, and supposedly the protector of us unprotected county islands has been mute during the hearings of the ACC.

The greatest depression since the 1930's has required this nation to spend borrowed money by the trillions to back up financial institutions, and other corporations to revive our economy. However, this has not stemmed increasing unemployment and the lowering value of fixed incomes. Does this make sense to triple the cost of sewer service in a retirement community?. Should we drive retirees that are essential to our Yuma county economy to other favorable climes?

As to the sewer rates, I hope the remaining property owners in the Foothills do not become complacent and let ACC triple our sewer rates in August. Each year, our legislators vote themselves a wage increase in the middle of the night. Dont let this happen re the sewer rate increase. The following are some things we should insist the County of Yuma, our protectors, look into. (1) Examine the expansion order by ADEQ to Far West to see if some or all of it can postponed. (2) Determine the current capacity of the sewers and place a hold on future connections. (3) Establish impact fees (like in Yuma) or new connection fees (4) Have the Attorneys General's office examine the conflict of interest inherent in the H&S/Far West relationship to assess their liability for making the failing sewer operation whole without gouging rate payers to make up for their inefficiencies. (5) Test current Foothill's residents disposition towards Yuma City annexation or (6) look into other avenues for providing the Foothills with a public utility to protect the residents from greed of private interests and assure that our sanitary services are provided by the community itself.


  
Larry Fosmoe

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Arizona Corporation Commission

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